

# WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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PAGE 01 OF 03 BEIRUT 9947  
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2921  
WHITEHOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

~~SECRET~~ BEIRUT 09947

NODIS  
WHITEHOUSE FOR JUDGE CLARK  
SECSTATE PLEASE PASS TO SECDEF AND CJCS  
FROM AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE  
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS  
SUBJECT: MCFARLANE/FAIRBANKS MISSION: WORST CASE STRATEGY FOR  
LEBANON

1. (SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. WHILE IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEKEND I EXPRESSED, IN NSC MEETINGS AND IN THE BRIEFING TO THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP, MY VIEW THAT THE CENTRAL FACTOR IN THE LEBANON CONFLICT IS SYRIA'S DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN AN ENDURING INFLUENCE OVER LEBANESE POLICY. GIVEN HER OVERWHELMING MILITARY POWER RELATIVE TO LEBANON, AND ABSENT MAJOR THIRD COUNTRY MILITARY INTERVENTION IN BEHALF OF LEBANON, SYRIA CAN ACHIEVE HER GOAL. SHE CAN EXERCISE HER INFLUENCE TO A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE BY MAINTAINING OCCUPATION FORCES IN THE COUNTRY AND/OR RELYING UPON LEBANESE POLITICANS IN THE CABINET WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO SYRIAN CONCERNS. FACED WITH THIS PROBLEM, OUR POLICY HAS BEEN

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 02 OF 03 BEIRUT 9947

DTG: 090104Z SEP 83 PSN: 065566

TO INSIST UPON SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON BUT TO AGREE TO THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY, ACCEPTING THAT IT WILL SURELY INCLUDE FIGURES BEHOLDEN TO SYRIA (E,7&., FRANJIYYEH, KARAMI AND BARRI). OUR POLITICAL STRATEGY HAS BEEN TO DEVELOP THE BROADEST POSSIBLE SUPPORT FOR LEBANON'S FORMAL CALL FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL THROUGH BILATERAL CONTACTS AND (IN THE DAYS AHEAD) THE UNITED NATIONS

CONCURRENTLY WE HAVE ENDORSED THIRD COUNTRY SUPPORT FOR LEBANON'S CALL FOR A CEASEFIRE IN PLACE, AN IMMEDIATE CONVENING OF THE LEADERS FOR THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE, MINOR REDEPLOYMENT OF LEBANESE FORCES IN THE BEIRUT AREA AND AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE ULTIMATE DEPLOYMENT OF LEBANESE ARMY FORCES TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN THE SHUF AND BEYOND. TO GIVE CREDIBILITY TO THIS POSITION WE, AND OUR ALLIES, HAVE GRADUALLY EXPANDED OUR MILITARY FORCE PRESENCE IN THE AREA. IT HAS BEEN OUR HOPE THAT SYRIA WILL RESPOND TO THIS COLLECTIVE POLITICAL AND MILITARY PRESSURE AND ACCEDE TO THE CEASEFIRE, THE FORMATION OF THE GNU, AND WITHDRAW HER FORCES, ETC. INTELLIGENCE REPORTS RECEIVED WITHIN THE PAST TWO DAYS AND

25X6

JUSTIFY A

REVIEW OF OUR STRATEGY AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY THAT SYRIA HAS NOT YET FOUND OUR STRATEGY CREDIBLE. WE BELIEVE FURTHER THAT PROPOSALS SUCH AS ARE CONTAINED IN THE STRATEGY PAPER AND DRAFT NSDD FOR THE GRADUAL EXPANSION OF FORCE PRESENCE TO RESOLVE THE LEBANESE CRISIS COULD BE AT BEST IRRELEVANT, AND AT WORST CATASTROPHIC UNLESS APPLIED IN THE CONTEXT OF A SPECIFIC STRATEGY DESIGNED TO BRING AN EARLY POSITIVE CHANGE IN SYRIAN BEHAVIOR. ON THE OTHER HAND WE BELIEVE THAT THE STRATEGIC ESCALATION -- IN BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY TERMS -- COULD ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULT.

3. IN PRACTICAL TERMS WE BELIEVE THERE ARE THREE CRITICAL CONDITIONS WHICH SHOULD APPLY BEFORE SUCH AN ESCALATION IS CONTEMPLATED. FIRST, THAT WE ARE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR ABOUT OUR OWN POLICY AND ITS LIMITS AND CONDITIONS; SECOND, THAT WE HAVE THE ACTIVE SUPPORT OF OUR MNF PARTNERS; THIRD, THAT THE KEY MODERATE ARAB STATES, PARTICULARLY

SECRET

PAGE 03 OF 03 BEIRUT 9947

DTG: 090104Z SEP 83 PSN: 065566

SAUDI ARABIA, BACK UP OUR STRATEGY AND OPPOSE SYRIA. THE STRATEGY WOULD BE BASED UPON THE PREMISE THAT SYRIA HAS NO INTENTION OF AGREEING EITHER TO A CEASEFIRE, TO THE SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL DIALOGUE IN LEBANON OR TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF HER OWN FORCES BUT ASSUMES THAT WHILE SHE MAY TAKE A POSITIVE POSITION ON THESE ELEMENTS PUBLICLY SHE WILL CONCURRENTLY PROPOSE SUCH PRECONDITIONS AS TO MAKE HER REALIZATION IMPOSSIBLE WHILE, ON THE GROUND, SHE SUPPORTS AND ULTIMATELY CONSTRICTS (THROUGH THE PSP) THE ENCLAVE OF BEIRUT LEADING TO THE FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

BT

SECRET